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New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 124

Global health and foreign policy

Letter from the Secretary-General (A/69/389)

Draft resolution (A/69/L.2)

The President: I should like to remind members that the debate on agenda item 124 is scheduled to take place on 10 December 2014.

Over the past six months, the Ebola outbreak has ravaged countries in West Africa in an unprecedented manner. Today, we come together as a family of nations in solidarity with the most affected countries — Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone — which have demonstrated great resolve and determination in the face of this daunting challenge.

Later on, the Secretary-General will brief the Assembly on the response of the United Nations system to the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa. I commend him for his personal efforts on this matter. I also thank Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, and Dr. David Nabarro, the Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Ebola Virus Disease, for their dedicated efforts.

The World Health Organization reports that of the nearly 5,000 people infected by the Ebola virus, about 2,500 have died so far. As shocking as those statistics are, the actual number of casualties from Ebola is likely to be even higher, since many deaths are going unreported. The virus is spreading exponentially, with half of all current cases recorded in just the last three weeks. The predictions from the World Health Organization are ominous. Given the current rate of infection, as many as 20,000 people could be infected with the Ebola virus over the next few months.

The time to act in a swift, coordinated and purposeful manner is now. Without quick and decisive action, the trail of devastation that this outbreak leaves behind will reach far beyond the parts of West Africa most affected up to now. Ebola is no longer a subregional or even regional calamity; it is an international crisis. Our immediate focus must be on containing the outbreak, both in terms of its geographical spread and the number of victims. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, the Ebola crisis has evolved into a complex emergency, with significant political, social, economic, humanitarian and security dimensions. The outbreak is unmatched, both in terms of lives lost and damage to already fragile health systems. Precious resources are being diverted from the treatment of other critical diseases, and the affected countries are struggling to maintain basic health services, with people dying from otherwise treatable medical conditions. Women are particularly at risk, given their roles as primary caregivers and community leaders. In Liberia, estimates indicate that as many as 75 per cent of the fatalities are women, while in Sierra Leone their number is around 59 per cent. Women are much more likely to be front-line health workers, which also puts them at higher risk.

The outbreak could also have far-reaching, destabilizing effects, and it comes at a time when the

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three countries most affected have started to enjoy relative peace, security and stability. Prior to the outbreak, all had made collective efforts to enhance socioeconomic development and to consolidate hard-won peacebuilding achievements. We must not allow Ebola to turn back the tide of progress for those countries.

In the light of those tragic developments, we have before us a draft resolution (A/69/L.2), in which the General Assembly welcomes the Secretary-General's plan to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). As envisioned, the Mission will harness capabilities and competencies across the United Nations system in a single, unified structure, in order to ensure a rapid, effective, efficient and coherent response to the crisis and to support national, regional and international efforts. The draft resolution also calls on Member States and relevant United Nations bodies to provide their full support to this critical Mission. In due course, the Secretary-General will submit a detailed report for consideration by the Assembly during this session.

Today, the General Assembly should add its powerful voice to that of the Security Council in calling on the international community to take immediate steps to support the countries affected by this deadly virus. While a high price has already been paid, the cost of inaction could reach unimaginable proportions. Together, we must take immediate, coordinated, decisive action to combat this destructive outbreak. I commend the draft resolution to the Assembly for adoption.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: I thank the General Assembly for convening on such short notice to address the Ebola outbreak at a time of busy preparations for the new Assembly session. We are all aware of the immensity of the suffering in West Africa and the enormity of the challenge. This crisis demands the attention of the entire membership of the United Nations. We must show solidarity as one United Nations and one global community. We must break through institutional barriers and any other hurdles that could impede rapid action. The General Assembly has a key role to play in showing the world the effective, responsive, caring face of the United Nations.

Earlier this year, I visited Sierra Leone in order to mark the closing of the United Nations peacekeeping operation there and to celebrate the country's remarkable turnaround from years of war and atrocities. In so doing, Sierra Leone has demonstrated the value of sustained international engagement and solidarity. Its neighbour Liberia has also known the depths of conflict and misery. It, too, wrote a new chapter in its history with the help of United Nations peacekeepers and other international support for its own painstaking efforts. Guinea, for its part, has achieved inroads against hunger and made progress towards some of the other Millennium Development Goals. The solidarity that made those gains and transformations possible is now needed to preserve that progress and help the people who have been thrust into the turmoil and uncertainty of the Ebola outbreak.

A crisis that started as a public-health emergency has taken on much wider scope, with significant economic, social, humanitarian, political and security dimensions. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are nearly 5,000 cases of Ebola virus disease in the region. But WHO also indicates that, given the shortfalls in reporting and monitoring, the real number is likely to be much higher. More than 2,500 people have died, and, as in so many other areas, women bear the brunt of the impact. They make up 70 per cent of the victims, reflecting the fact that it is women who form the bulk of health-care workers and who are more likely to care for sick relatives and prepare bodies for burial. The number of cases is doubling every three weeks. The fear of contagion is itself proving contagious, disrupting economic activity and the provision of social services. Spillover effects in the region and beyond are increasingly evident. As the disease spreads, a truth becomes clear. None of us can consider himself insulated from the threat of Ebola; all of us must be part of the response.

The Governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are determined to do whatever they can to address the crisis. They have also written to me, asking the United Nations for assistance and support. We are strongly committed to mobilizing the international community and helping a full range of partners to do what is needed to respond to this challenge. The World Health Organization, under the leadership of its Director-General, Ms. Margaret Chan, has developed a response road map and is working with the affected countries to identify the best possible epidemiological ways to address the outbreak, including through a combination of Ebola treatment centres and community care centres.

The United Nations system is providing assistance and expertise. At the same time, we must do much more. There is an urgent need to take international action to the next level. Members have before them my letter outlining the scope of the new United Nations mission that I have decided to establish (A/69/389). The United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) will provide a platform for wide-ranging international efforts. It will have five priorities: first, to stop the outbreak; secondly, to treat the infected; thirdly, to provide essential services; fourthly, to preserve stability; and, fifthly, to prevent outbreaks in non-affected countries.

The Mission will support national efforts. Reinforcing Government leadership will be one of its guiding principles. The Mission will also emphasize community outreach, training and education. Misunderstandings about the disease and how it is transmitted have hindered the response so far. Local leaders, including traditional and religious leaders, have important roles to play in raising awareness. This morning, I spoke by telephone with His Excellency Mr. John Dramani Mahama, President of Ghana. He expressed his immediate and wholehearted support for the efforts of the United Nations and agreed to host the headquarters of UNMEER in Accra. UNMEER will also have offices in each of the three most affected countries. President Mahama is also allowing the country's international airport to be used for the vital air bridge. I would like to express my profound gratitude for those contributions.

Many Governments and organizations have come forward with impressive contributions of military assets, human resources, financing and supplies. African countries and the African Union have shown admirable solidarity. The United States has announced that it will take a number of significant steps, including the deployment of 3,000 troops to provide expertise in logistics, training and engineering. I commend President Barack Obama for his leadership.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Government of Cuba for its announcement of plans to send a 165-member team of doctors and nurses to the region. That is in addition to Cuba's robust medical assistance to Haiti and is a wonderful expression of global solidarity. I appreciate the support and solidarity of President Castro Ruz. I am also very grateful to the Government of China for its generous support. A 59-member Chinese laboratory team left Beijing for Sierra Leone earlier this week and will soon be on the ground there, delivering much-needed care and expertise. I thank President Xi Jinping for his leadership.

Those contributions are important and highly welcome. I hope other Member States, along with the private sector and civil society, will do far more. Our best estimate is that we need a twenty-fold increase in assistance. Earlier this week, the United Nations outlined a set of critical needs totalling almost $1 billion over the next six months. The protection of staff and all health responders must also be a top priority in halting the transmission of the disease. In order to attract and retain the doctors and medical professionals required at this time, we need to be able to provide emergency medical evacuation, should they become infected with Ebola in the conduct of their duties.

I call on countries with the means to enable us to provide such vital assurances. I also reiterate my appeals to air and shipping companies not to isolate countries. Travel and border restrictions will not prevent the virus from getting out but will prevent supplies and health responders from getting in. Beyond our current focus on the emergency, there is a need to address fundamental gaps in health care and other basic services. It is not too soon to initiate a global discussion and to come up with new ideas that will allow for more timely action and prevent the next epidemic.

As each day passes, more people die. Many more are infected. The demands of response and containment become exponentially greater. To bring the crisis under control, all of us will have to work in unorthodox ways, break through barriers and leverage the best that each of us can bring to bear. Speed is of the essence. Action by the General Assembly today through the adoption of draft resolution A/69/L.2 will enable the United Nations to quickly increase its capacity to deliver in the affected countries.

The establishment of UNMEER is only the beginning. We will need to stay engaged and reach new heights of cooperation. No single State or organization can do that alone. I look forward to Members' strong and rapid support for the new United Nations health emergency mission and for the countries and peoples who have turned to us for help in a moment of critical need.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before proceeding further, in view of the desire of members to dispose of this item expeditiously, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to considering draft resolution A/69/L.2. In that connection, since the draft resolution was circulated only this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly, unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objections, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with that proposal.

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/69/L.2.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Gettu (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/69/L.2, entitled "Measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under paragraphs 1 to 3 of draft resolution A/69/L.2, the General Assembly would welcome the Secretary-General's intention to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response; requests the Secretary-General to take such measures as may be necessary for the prompt execution of his intention and to submit a detailed report thereon for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session; and calls upon all Member States, the relevant United Nations bodies and the United Nations system to provide their full support to the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response.

The Secretariat is in the process of preparing the modalities for the implementation of the requests contained in the aforementioned paragraphs of the draft resolution. The related resource requirements are being assessed and will be sought through the appropriate budgetary mechanism of the Organization.

The President: Before proceeding further, I would like to make the following oral revision to the ninth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. The paragraph will now read:

> "Noting the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2176 (2014) of 15 September 2014, and resolution 2177 (2014) of 18 September 2014."

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/69/L.2, entitled "Measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa", as orally revised. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/69/L.2, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/69/L.2, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 69/1).

The President: We will now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Ngafuan (Liberia): Allow me to begin by extending my personal congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly. We are proud as Africans to see you in that position, and my delegation assures you of our fullest cooperation to ensure the success of your tenure.

I also extend Liberia's deep appreciation to you, Sir, for your initiative in proposing the positive and forward-looking resolution 69/1, entitled "Measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa". Liberia wholeheartedly supports the resolution adopted in this Hall today and calls on all Member States to take practical actions to implement it, as it is another significant step in the difficult battle to defeat, once and for all, the deadly enemy called Ebola.

Since the disease invaded the subregion some months ago, its rapid spread has confounded our national Governments, as well as our partners. The outbreak has come at a time when the affected countries were enjoying a semblance of peace, security and stability after many years of civil upheaval and had begun to take some laudable strides amid challenges to respond to the multifaceted development challenges inherited from years of conflict. In Liberia, it came at a time when the health system of the country was just beginning to endure the shocks of the civil conversion and therefore not adequately robust to withstand a pandemic of such huge magnitude.

The toll that the epidemic is now exacting on the country is enormous and incalculable. The already weak

health system has been plunged into further paralysis. Many protected health workers, who have been at the forefront of the fight against this deadly disease of a scale of magnitude they have never seen before, have become casualties themselves, and 80 per cent of those infected succumb to the virus. Nearly 70 per cent of those infected are women.

As the death toll increases, more children are being orphaned, adding to the existing social problems. The fear created by the outbreak among those who seek non-Ebola-related health-care attention is having a dreadful effect on the health sector and on the country. The situation has seriously undermined the country's ability to sufficiently respond to other more routine illnesses, such as malaria, measles, diarrhoea and typhoid fever. Pregnant women seeking medical assistance while trying to give birth are also dying, owing to fears among health workers of contracting the virus.

The Ebola disease poses a threat to the peace and security of our country, as many Government functions have been suspended to deal with the emergency. The economic impact of the outbreak is undermining the ability of the Government to continue to provide basic services for the Liberian people. Meanwhile, measures taken by the Government and our many partners, notably the World Health Organization, Médecins Sans Frontières and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have thus far been unsuccessful in disrupting the further transmission of the virus.

As if the situation were not debilitating enough, the affected countries are facing virtual economic sanctions and quarantine. The restriction of travel from affected countries and the banning of flights can only lead to an aggravation of the effects of the outbreak and undermine efforts to contain the disease. Liberia wishes to thank those countries that have lifted the measures imposed earlier and are now opening their doors for the coordination of global action in fighting the disease. We encourage others to adopt that approach.

My Government is very encouraged by the various actions taken in the past month or two to significantly reinforce the international response to the continuing spread of the Ebola virus disease in the affected countries. Several high-level appointments are being made by the Secretary-General to sharpen the focus of the United Nations on what is now an issue of global concern. The United States Government announced a level of support to the region that we think will have a monumental impact. And yesterday the Security Council adopted resolution 2177 (2014), sponsored by some 134 States, recognizing the risks that the Ebola epidemic poses to peace, security and stability at the national and international levels and setting out some measures to respond more robustly to the disease.

The recent meeting of the Security Council (see S/PV.7268) afforded an opportunity that was seized by an impressive number of Member States to indicate the various levels and types of support that they intend to provide. We extend the deep gratitude of the Government of Liberia to all those who participated in that open debate and for the various types of support offered, including the words of solidarity, all of which assured our people in Liberia and the diaspora that they are not alone in the difficult struggle against the disease.

The Secretary-General capitalized on that occasion to announce his proposal to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response in the region. Keeping up that momentum, you, Sir, have lost no time in submitting resolution 69/1 today, with the objective of enabling the Secretary-General to move ahead in defining the modalities for implementing his proposal. We commend that prudent and swift action, because lost time translates into lost lives. It is our expectation that a new mission, coupled with other structures and administrative arrangements that the Secretary-General has put in place in New York, will ensure strong United Nations leadership, effective coordination and efficient delivery of goods and services with national ownership at its core.

Liberia congratulates you, Mr. President, on this effort, and we commend all our international partners for joining us in putting an early end to this disease, which has ravaged our part of the continent.

Mr. Motsoaledi (South Africa): South Africa joins the other delegations that have spoken before us in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the role of President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. We assure you of South Africa's support and cooperation. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his initiative in the convening of this special session.

South Africa welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/1, on measures to contain and combat Ebola in West Africa. The unprecedented outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone — which,

according to the World Health Organization, has affected more than 4,300 people and killed more than half of those who have contracted the disease — is a serious indictment of all of us as members of the global community. The Ebola virus outbreak painfully highlights how a public-health issue can very quickly turn into a foreign policy issue and have devastating effects on a country's economy, trade and international relations.

Unfortunately, public-health issues attract our attention only when they get out of hand and once a large number of people have died. In the past three weeks, cases have dramatically increased in the three countries, with widespread and intense transmission. That highlights the urgent need to enforce control measures and increase capacity for case management, safe burials, contact-tracing and social mobilization.

The outbreak continues to expand geographically. It continues to escalate. There are still critical shortages of Ebola treatment-centre beds in the three countries due to the intense and widespread transmission. Although laboratory capacity is gradually expanding, there are still critical needs in a number of locations. Increased laboratory capacity is essential for proper screening and triage of patients.

In response, South Africa has provided a mobile laboratory with experts to Sierra Leone. That laboratory will be further expanded because of the increased workload. Further laboratory support will be provided for Liberia. We will establish a 40-bed field hospital in Lakka, Freetown, close to the mobile laboratory, which will assist in addressing the critical shortage of beds. The field hospital will be staffed by 75 health professionals. The process of recruiting those professionals is under way.

Through the procurement mechanisms of the World Health Organization, we will purchase 9,600 basic sets of personal protective equipment plus 6,400 sets of heavy-duty personal protective equipment for health workers in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. We will provide medical supplies plus commodities for infection control, four ambulances, four 4x4 vehicles, 70 motorcycles and four generators. We have as a country called on all partners to work with the Government to respond to the crisis. Many partners in the private sector, academic institutions and civil society in South Africa have responded positively. Today, we received pledges from companies that are listed on the Johannesburg stock exchange. Most of them will support logistics and provide in-kind donations, financial contributions, air travel, ambulances and medical supplies.

At the request of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa is providing training in Ebola preparedness for 94 participants from 16 countries. That training, which will start on Monday, 22 September, will further assist in strengthening surveillance, case-finding and detection, reporting and tracing, and information-sharing on the Ebola virus disease in a timely manner. It will enhance clinical management of infected patients. South Africa is further providing support in conducting tests for samples that may be sent from SADC countries to our laboratory. The South African National Institution for Communicable Diseases plays a leading role for the whole SADC region in that regard. It is also worth noting that, at the national level, South Africa has already taken action to ensure comprehensive response measures against Ebola should the virus be detected in the country at any stage. For instance, 11 hospitals in the country have been designated to be on standby in case of Ebola outbreak.

The fact that the Ebola outbreak is the largest and deadliest to date and that it is taking place in countries that are in need of strong basic-services infrastructure and health systems means that international support to those affected countries is absolutely essential. We welcome the support provided by other States and the valiant efforts of civil society actors, such as Doctors Without Borders and the World Health Organization. They all need our assistance.

Mr. Msosa (Malawi): On behalf of the Group of African States, I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, a day after the Security Council had a debate and adopted a resolution on the scourge of Ebola (Council resolution 2177 (2014)). It is vital that the Ebola outbreak remain a high priority on the global agenda, particularly because it is not a problem that affects only the continent of Africa but one that affects us all. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his initiative aimed at establishing the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. In that vein, the African Group welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/1, entitled "Measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa".

The Ebola virus disease epidemic, as we are all aware, has caused an unprecedented public-health emergency that affects the African continent and

beyond. Since the outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in December 2013 in West Africa, citizens in affected countries have been engulfed by absolute fear. Traders, farmers and health officials can no longer go about their daily business without the uncertainty of who might be next in the Ebola trail, which could possibly rob them of their very livelihoods. The Ebola crisis is even more difficult for post-conflict countries that have fought to make progress in community reintegration, rehabilitation and the rebuilding of their social fabric. The retardation of economic development is all the more worrisome.

The African Group wishes to express its thanks to the United Nations and its Member States for their commitments in financial and human resources to make sure that this deadly disease is tackled. The African Group welcomes the initiative of the African Union (AU) in spearheading continental efforts to respond to the epidemic and its ongoing efforts, including the invocation of article 6, subparagraph (f), of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. That sub-paragraph relates to the AU mandate with regard to humanitarian action and disaster management, as well as to the deployment of a joint public-health, military and civilian mission to affected countries that was authorized by the African Union Peace and Security Council at its 450th meeting, on 19 August.

Furthermore, the Africa Group would like to welcome the AU's Interagency Task Force on Ebola, whose functions include lobbying and advocacy for ethical and effective responses to Ebola at various levels. Currently, as part of its advocacy and lobbying efforts, the AU is engaging African Union member States that have closed their borders and placed restrictive measures on air travel to ensure that humanitarian principles of access, international health regulations and the recommendations of the World Health Organization are met.

The AU's African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention for early detection is a long-term approach designed to enhance the process of operationalization through information-sharing, tracking of the development of the disease and implementation of effective, coordinated responses.

It is worth emphasizing that continuous research, assessment and analysis of Ebola will serve a very useful purpose in the long run. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for us to listen and be guided by the realities on the ground. Yesterday, in the Security Council debate on Ebola (see S/PV. 7268), we heard a very personal and powerful testimony by Mr. Jackson K.P. Niamah from Médecins Sans Frontières in Monrovia. There is a need to continue to allocate adequate resources, financial support and capacity-building as well as basic resources such as food, water and clothing. Equally important is the need to provide psychological support and love to the victims rather than treat them like outcasts through their process of isolation. As we move together in our common fight against deadly Ebola, those stories should drive and focus our efforts.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm the Africa Group's continuous support and efforts to ensure the adequate coordination and harmonization of all strategic efforts and implementation processes to achieve our desired goals on the continent of Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Vrailas (European Union): Since I believe that this is the first time we are taking the floor at the current session of the General Assembly, my delegation would like to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on the assumption of your important duties. We wish you the very best in your endeavours and will fully support you in all your efforts to move the General Assembly agenda forward during what will be a key year for the United Nations and the international community.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. We thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting. We also thank the Secretary-General for his important statement and all his personal efforts in trying to tackle the crisis caused by the Ebola virus outbreak. We are deeply concerned about the crisis, which is not only a regional problem but one that affects us all, as confirmed yesterday in the emergency meeting of the Security Council on Ebola (see S/PV.7238). We deplore the loss of lives, both among citizens of the affected countries and among international responders. We pay tribute to all humanitarian and health workers on the front line, who are working tirelessly to bring the crisis to an end.

We welcome the United Nations coordination system created by the Secretary-General, including the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, to ensure that all relevant parts

of the United Nations system are activated and working coherently.

The European Union is preparing a comprehensive framework in response to the Ebola epidemic, which will also include considerations on related impacts, notably the food crisis, the health system crisis and the negative macroeconomic impact. That document, aligned with the Ebola response road map of the World Health Organization (WHO), highlights the main challenges and the ways in which the European Union has assisted and will further assist with the response.

We will continue to assist the most affected areas in particular, and to work with all actors involved — the national authorities in the affected countries; WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other parts of the United Nations system; regional partners, including the Economic Community of West African States; and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières and other non-governmental organizations — to help tackle the disease as swiftly and efficiently as possible.

As it stands, the European Union has pledged €150 million for the treatment of patients, training, measures to contain the epidemic, medical laboratories, maintaining basic health services and budget support. As part of that package, the European Union has also provided €5 million to the African Union to support their efforts to provide assistance to the affected countries. To that, one needs to add the very substantive bilateral contributions made by EU member States, both in funding and through in-kind assistance, including the secondment of specialists. Some of their bilateral contributions are coordinated through the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism.

The European Union and its member States are working actively to find possible options to reduce the growing isolation of countries in the region. The European Union will address the urgent need to retain and re-establish transport links and the necessary medical evacuation. We all recognize the magnitude of the challenge in front of us. The European Union and its member States are committed to deploy all efforts to step up support and assist in putting an end to this outbreak.

Mr. Minah (Sierra Leone): Let me commend you, Mr. President, on your elevation to your present position in what promises to be a momentous session for us all.

Yesterday the Security Council spoke with one voice by passing the historic resolution 2177 (2014). Today, when given the opportunity, the General Assembly has also made its voice heard. Beyond the resolutions, it is now a time for action. Most of all, we should bear in mind those on the front line: the doctors, the medical workers, the nurses, the burial boys and others who have volunteered to help others without concern for their own safety. We should also bear in mind the fallen. Names that were strangers to us are now sadly familiar: Dr. Umar Khan, Dr. Modupeh Cole, Dr. Olivet Buck and countless others who have given their lives in the service of the victims.

When the current Ebola epidemic started, few in West Africa knew about the extent of the danger it posed. As we sit here today, we all fully realize that it is now a global health emergency. That has been certified by the World Health Organization, which has been matched by the declarations of public health emergencies in the States primarily affected. West Africa, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are united in grief and united in suffering. But we are also united in the hope and the conviction that this, as with the civil conflict in our States in the recent past, will also pass. This, too, shall pass.

With the help of the global community, we are confident that all we hope for in terms of logistics and material, both human and otherwise, will find its way to the region. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his leadership, and we are grateful for the creation of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, which we hope will bypass the normal institutional bureaucracy and be set up as soon as possible.

When we look to the future, we know that those countries, which were the victims of civil conflict, will regain their development momentum. It is as a global community that we will best be able to face a global threat.

What started as a medical emergency has now become an economic emergency, a humanitarian emergency and, in certain circumstances, a public security emergency. The World Bank has already recorded a drop in the development levels of the three countries, to varying degrees, and also projects further drops in those indices.

The Ebola virus epidemic has had a disproportionate impact in that women, who are the primary caregivers

in the homes to their ill and suffering family members, are also disproportionately victims of the virus. We ask that all initiatives and measures taken be not gender-neutral, but gender-sensitive.

As we look to the future beyond the resolutions, and as we look to the actions and measures that the United Nations and States will take, we are mindful of those who have pledged and already proposed support. Those States are too numerous to mention, but in particular I would like to single out the members of the Security Council, especially the United States of America and China, but also States that have excelled in what can perhaps be best described as health diplomacy, such as Cuba, which not only has a history of health diplomacy but has responded in dramatic fashion by sending over 165 doctors to the region.

We are grateful for the many pledges of support that have occurred between yesterday and today from our colleagues and from Member States. We are gratified that the call to action by the Secretary-General and by the President of the Assembly has been answered so emphatically.

In this time in which we conduct our business at this session, we are occupied — or perhaps preoccupied — by many issues in front of us. This session, as I said before, will be momentous. But we have demonstrated by our actions today and by the Security Council's action yesterday that when called upon we can achieve a singularity of purpose in a common objective.

There is no doubt that the road ahead will be difficult. There will be many more victims. But what the United Nations has emphatically declared is that we will not be defeated by the disease; we will not be cowed into silence or fear by this epidemic. All of us, no matter how large or how small, have a role to play. A culture of fear should not allow the epidemic metastasize into something greater.

Today, as I speak, we have word of various shipments going to Sierra Leone, supplies being delivered and various national and international groups, including non-governmental organizations, mobilizing over social media and from the epicentre of the disease to make a difference and to make their voices heard in terms of practical support.

At the end of the day, all that we do and say here must have relevance on the front line. Our prayers and thoughts go to the fallen. Our prayers and thoughts are with those who continue, day in and day out, in difficult circumstances and with limited supplies, to answer to the ultimate call of the Hippocratic Oath: first, do no harm; secondly, others above self.

We are gratified by the support that we have received in this house. The three primarily affected States will continue to be grateful and to do their part in strengthening their public-health systems going forward, beyond Ebola, to make sure that we are not faced with a similar threat in future.

Mr. Touré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): First, allow me to convey my delegation's warm congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your outstanding election to preside over the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. I also wish to express my delegation's profound gratitude for the convening of this important meeting, which is part of the new momentum of the international community in its fight against the haemorrhagic fever caused by the Ebola virus.

Guinea welcomes the initiative by the Secretary-General to deploy a United Nations emergency response mission against the epidemic in the West Africa subregion. We also welcome the adoption of resolution 69/1, on measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa. That initiative eloquently illustrates anew the Secretary-General's personal commitment and determination to mobilize all of the efforts of the international community to contain and eradicate the scourge of the Ebola virus, which, unfortunately, has already claimed too many victims and now threatens to destabilize our countries.

As the Secretary-General stated, the unprecedented crisis that is in full swing in Liberia, Sierra Leone and in my country, Guinea, demands unprecedented measures to save human lives. We dare to hope that all of the initiatives will lead to the establishment of a large coalition to combat the Ebola epidemic.

To date, the epidemic has claimed over 2,400 lives, including caregivers. In Guinea, where the epidemic began in March, the number of cases has risen to 882, of which 662 have been confirmed, including 555 deaths. The victims range in age from 15 to 45 years, with women making up the majority.

Adding to the crisis at hand, the epidemic has gravely affected our economies, as seen in the decline in commerce and productivity and in decreased activity in many other sectors, including transport, investment and tourism. The World Bank has warned that if the Ebola virus epidemic is not contained and rapidly

eradicated, its economic impact on the three countries most affected will be catastrophic. In Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the quarantine of certain areas has interrupted agricultural production and the distribution of certain foods. That has led in turn to panic, penury and significant price increases for basic foodstuffs.

At present, urgent action is necessary, not only to halt the health crisis and save human lives, but also to preserve stability and the progress achieved with the help of the international community through the Peacebuilding Commission and other United Nations bodies, as well as through bilateral and multilateral partnerships. To that end, the response of the international community must be global and coordinated in order to guarantee the best results as quickly as possible.

I would like to reassure the Secretary-General that his initiative has already created a feeling of relief and hope in my country and in the subregion. The Government and people of Guinea are committed to closely cooperating with the United Nations for the success of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response.

To conclude, I would like to commend the American presidency of the Security Council, the members of the Council and all of the delegations that yesterday sponsored resolution 2177 (2014), on the Ebola virus disease. It is eloquent testimony to solidarity on a grand scale. We would also like once again to thank France, the United States, Russia, China, Japan, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the many other bilateral and multilateral partners that, alongside the World Health Organization, Médecins Sans Frontières and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, as well as other countries, such as Morocco and Mali, have from the beginning shown proof of solidarity, fraternity and friendship.

Ms. Cousens (United States of America): I wish to thank the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and their teams for their extraordinary leadership in confronting the Ebola virus and for mobilizing all the determination and the resources of the United Nations system behind that. We are taking the floor to strongly support the Secretary-General's proposal for a United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response.

Yesterday, an unprecedented 134 countries came together to sponsor Security Council resolution 2177 (2014), which calls for swift and decisive action to scale up the global response to the Ebola epidemic. Today, the General Assembly comes together to signal its concern, to add its voice and to pledge strong support to the United Nations effort. In doing so, we stand together in saying we will not turn a blind eye when human tragedy is unfolding, and we will not bury our heads in the sand when called upon to act.

The United States is answering this call for specialized capabilities and resources and will work in close coordination with the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. We welcome the commitment of other Governments, foundations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to join in the effort. The real measure of our impact will not be the commitments we make, but the commitments we deliver on and the speed with which we act. The math is simple: the sooner we act and the more of us that contribute, the more lives we save. Most of all, we are humbled and inspired by all of those working on the front lines to fight and turn back this disease.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): At this very moment in the Security Council, where Argentina is serving as a non-permanent member, there is an important debate taking place on the challenges and complexities confronting us in the situation in Iraq. However, my country could not be absent from this meeting of the General Assembly — the most representative body of the United Nations — to express not only our pleasure but also the commitment of our delegation to the adoption by consensus of resolution 69/1, on measures to contain and combat the recent outbreak of Ebola in West Africa.

We also wish to decisively support the Secretary-General's proposal to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. Without a doubt, that initiative will enable us to provide an effective, comprehensive response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, which is an issue that, given its implications and the risk of spillover effects, involves all of us and requires a response from all of us.

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Argentine Republic, I would like to express to the families of the thousands of victims and their Governments our deep sorrow and our absolute solidarity. Argentina will cooperate with the Mission,

which is a cause for everyone. Without doubt, the seriousness of the current Ebola epidemic justifies our meeting here to decide, to take action, to determine urgent measures to avoid having the living conditions of people of the world being dramatically affected, as is happening in our brother countries in West Africa.

In consonance with the Secretary-General, Argentina sees the Ebola epidemic not only as a health problem, but rather as a multidimensional reality, and this is how we must tackle it. We recognize that an epidemic of these characteristics, if we do not contain it in short order, can have huge humanitarian, economic and social consequences. It could also bring about conditions leading to institutional instability or social insecurity.

The West African countries do not deserve this. They do not deserve this because they have made great efforts in post-conflict situations to put themselves on the path to inclusive economic and social development. They do not deserve this — not the West African countries, nor the developing world, nor all of humankind. That is why we believe that at this time of deep suffering for many, time is pressing. We cannot spare any efforts, but we cannot impose unconnected actions. That is why Argentina supports the United Nations and its specialized agencies as the entity that should have the responsibility for coordinating the various efforts, contributions and lines of action that are soon to be implemented because of the urgency required.

Argentina supported the adoption of resolution 69/1 and wishes to underscore that it was adopted by the General Assembly. It is encouraging that the Assembly has exercised its responsibility to follow through on proposals — in this case from the Secretary-General — to consider issues that do not affect or endanger security alone. These are situations that, by learning from mistakes made and lessons of the past, enable us to be lucid and effective so as to put rights at the forefront, and not the violence of the future.

We heard yesterday — and here I express my solidarity with the countries of West Africa — that an epidemic of such characteristics could have been avoided or more effectively tackled if those countries had more sound, more comprehensive health systems with proper infrastructure, and if they had more trained human resources at their disposal. This is not the time to scold or blame them. We have to understand the profound causes for this inequality, because the Ebola outbreak is one face of poverty and inequality. That is why it seems to me that we, the developing countries, are not dull or incompetent, but rather aware that we must continue to work for a more just distribution of wealth, to achieve profound reforms of the international financial system, to achieve financing for development based on cooperation and solidarity and to free ourselves from the enormous weight of sovereign debt and establish fair rules in debt restructuring.

Yesterday, the World Health Organization Director-General, Ms. Chan, said in the Security Council (see S/PV.7268) that this was a social, economic and humanitarian crisis. Allow me to reaffirm that it is also an ethical and political crisis, as it uncovers the consequences of poverty — the poverty that we have pledged to eradicate, but with the dignity in which we all deserve to live. What a paradox that women are the majority of the victims — not because we are weaker, not because we are more vulnerable, but rather because we almost exclusively are the caregivers. How will we change the world if in West Africa, with the poverty, inequality and injustice of a global order — which we must change — the term "to care" has become synonymous with dying?

Mr. Kamau (Kenya): As this is the first time I address the Assembly with you, Sir, as President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the role of President of the General Assembly. I also congratulate you on your decision to allow this debate to take place today on this important and pressing matter: the Ebola crisis.

I would like to align myself with the statement of the African Group as delivered by the representative of Malawi.

The Ebola crisis is a devastating emergency whose economic, social, psychological and life-threatening implications are horrendous. It is no exaggeration to say that in order of magnitude and as a potential threat to life, families and society, this crisis is among the worst threats we face in the world today. The Mano River countries, particularly Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, are at the epicentre, engulfed by this virus, which is posing existential threats of historic proportions to them. But none of us is safe. None of us is either too far away or too rich to be within the reach of this virus. The lessons of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other global epidemics must not be forgotten. We ignore Ebola are at our own peril.

It is therefore heartening to see the General Assembly recognize the importance of this issue and give it prominence and global attention here at this meeting. Let me once again congratulate you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General for having recognized that the Ebola horror that has now engulfed those countries is indeed a crisis of international proportions, one that deserves a global response. Indeed, as was recognized in the Security Council just yesterday, the crisis demands that it be recognized and defined as a threat to international peace and security and as a humanitarian emergency of potentially global proportions.

My delegation therefore welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response — the United Nations response — and recognizes that this response must have the following four important dimensions. It must recognize, first, the urgency of this crisis and the need for a swift and determined response, and, secondly, the scale of the challenge and the need for a commensurate scaled-up response that fits that challenge and its potential to escalate. Third is the need for thoroughness in the technical response to ensure that we do not create fear nor failures and lapses that might undermine the response and the confidence of the affected populations. Fourth is the need for solidarity in the character of the response, through which we must ensure that the countries and the response de-isolate the affected countries and de-stigmatize the affected populations. The solidarity must seek to build a global response that meets the national challenge that each of these countries faces.

The President of Kenya, His Excellency Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, has led a determined national response to the Ebola crisis in our own country. Kenya has spoken directly and forthrightly about the crisis at the African Union, both in Addis Ababa and earlier this week in Malabo, as well as within the East African Community only yesterday. Our President has been emphatic in stressing Kenya's solidarity with the affected countries and their populations. Kenya has put in place a national preparedness programme to ensure that the virus does not find fertile ground in our country to cause further havoc around the world.

In reaching out to our sister countries, last month Kenya donated a total of $1 million — $350,000 to each of the three worst-hit countries — as a humble token of our solidarity. Kenya stands ready to do more by sharing expertise on Ebola management, by supporting diagnostic capabilities, by making available specialized laboratories and by deploying health workers and doctors within the context of the international response.

Kenya is also concerned by the isolation of the affected countries that has resulted from the travel bans and transport communication restrictions that have been imposed. On Wednesday this week, our Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs announced in Addis Ababa that the Kenyatta Administration was working hard with the legislative arms of our Government to seek a review of the ban of Kenya Airways flights to the affected countries.

Close to 3,000 people are dead and many more have been infected in just a few weeks of the spread of this virus. This may sound unalarming to our jaded international community sometimes, but the projections of the trajectories of this disease are sobering and shocking. Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, among other countries in the region, need urgent and determined support.

Let us learn our lessons. Health-system investments, like in investment in education and poverty eradication, are as much an economic and health imperative as they are an imperative for national, global peace and security, and indeed an imperative for human survival.

Mr. Mukerji (India): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for the initiative that resulted in the adoption of resolution 69/1 by all 193 Member States this afternoon. We salute you for the alacrity shown in taking this initiative. Even in your first few days in office, you meet our high expectations and confidence.

Though the outbreak of the Ebola virus is occurring in West Africa, it is a matter of grave concern for my country and for all of us who are Members of the United Nations. We are united today by our common responsibility. We pray for all those affected by this virus. We commit ourselves to working together with our partners in finding a cure for this disease.

The needs of the affected countries are large. They include an urgent need for funds, transportation, doctors, health services, medical supplies and social mobilization. The affected countries obviously do not themselves have the wherewithal to meet all those requirements. My country has provided medicines and financial assistance to the Governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. We have also made an

additional financial contribution to the World Health Organization specifically earmarked for addressing the Ebola virus outbreak.

India has troops available in the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), including an all-female formed police unit. Apart from the maintenance of law and order, they will do whatever is asked of them by the UNMIL leadership as part of the United Nations system's response to this outbreak.

India has deep-rooted and historical connections with West Africa. There are 45,000 Indian nationals living in that part of the continent. We therefore are together with the people of West Africa at this time of crisis.

We commend the Secretary-General and you, Mr. President, for your leadership. The coordinating role of the General Assembly, which consists of all the Members of the United Nations, is central to responding to the requests by the Governments of the affected countries. We reiterate our continued support to our partners in West Africa, both bilaterally and through the United Nations, at this hour of need.

Mr. Gumende (Mozambique): Since this is the first time I have taken the floor at this session, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate you warmly, Mr. President, on your assumption of your duties in presiding over the proceedings of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. I would like to assure you of our support as you discharge your duties as steward of our deliberations. My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the convening of this meeting and its gratitude to the Secretary-General for spearheading the establishment and deployment of a special United Nations emergency response mission to combat the Ebola outbreak that is afflicting some of our sister countries in West Africa.

We consider resolution 69/1, adopted today, and the Secretary-General's initiative to be appropriate responses for mobilizing the necessary political will and resources, given the alarmingly fast spread of this highly lethal virus, which has caused so much suffering to the communities affected and the regrettable loss of more than 2,500 lives, particularly in our sister countries of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. The epidemic is already disrupting economic activities, affecting livelihoods and jeopardizing the development gains attained in the past few years, threatening to derail the consolidation of peace and stability in these countries and the entire subregion.

We share the view that the impact of this epidemic has now become a global health emergency in which the international community should collectively undertake to play an active and effective role so as to help bring it under control as quickly as possible. In that regard, we commend those countries and organizations that have already pledged to provide support and resources for assisting the countries most affected, as well as their neighbours, including announced deployments of personnel and the African Union's support for the Ebola outbreak initiative. We would like to acknowledge the efforts of the medical teams on the ground that have been working in very difficult and dangerous conditions, risking and sometimes losing their lives in order to help those in need, as they strive heroically to contain the spread of the epidemic.

National and regional leadership and effective communication will continue to be important requisites for the success of this endeavour. We therefore commend the Secretary-General's emphasis on establishing a strong, system-wide approach to coordination by the United Nations that will interface closely with the Governments of the countries affected and with other partners. It will ensure a fast, united response that will avoid duplication of effort and encourage the efficient use of resources. We hope it will also help to strengthen overstretched public-health institutions and ensure a sustainable response to the epidemic in the long term, beyond the current emergency interventions. We would like to assure the Secretary-General of our support in this endeavour and look forward to following it closely as implementation of the initiative unfolds.

Mr. Lasso Mendoza (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to reiterate my delegation's congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly. You can count on our support during this intensive part of the session.

Ecuador would like to express its sincere solidarity with its African brother countries suffering under the terrible epidemic caused by the Ebola virus, particularly Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. We have been in contact with those countries' Governments in order to consult them on their requirements and needs at this difficult time, with the goal of giving our solidarity and support concrete form within the framework of action in the United Nations, especially the World Health Organization.

We commend the countries, particularly those in Latin America and the Caribbean, that have sent personnel and appropriate equipment to the areas affected by this terrible disease. In that regard, I should highlight the generous cooperation of Cuba, which has sent a medical team. This brother country of ours, despite decades of an unjust and illegal blockade, has continued to display its great generosity since, as the Cuban Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs said yesterday (see S/PV.7268), it does not give what is left over; it shares what it has.

As the organ that represents all States Members of the United Nations, it is the particular duty of the General Assembly to debate and take decisions concerning topics related to international cooperation in the face of a health emergency, as described in paragraph 1 (b) of Article 13 of the Charter of the United Nations. We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this urgent meeting to enable us in the General Assembly to address this situation and thus to shoulder its responsibility.

Finally, I would particularly like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for establishing a United Nations mission for the emergency response to Ebola. I would like to underscore my country's support for the work of the Mission, and for the efforts of Dr. David Nabarro, Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Ebola, and of the World Health Organization.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We wish you every success in your stewardship of the Assembly and you can count on our firm support.

Venezuela commends the adoption of today's resolution 69/1 and its provisions for containing and combating the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa. We join with the rest of the international community in actively expressing our concern about the alarming reports of this devastating epidemic. The capacity for destruction of this disease, which is threatening Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and other countries, could spread even beyond the continent. These circumstances ineluctably leave the international community and its principal multilateral bodies with the task of agreeing on the effective, coordinated and speedy measures that the emergency requires. As we have heard, the epidemic's exponential rate of growth demands an immediate response.

Just a few months ago, these West African countries were entering a period of stability, peace and economic recovery, after dealing with bad outbreaks of internal violence. We cannot ignore such issues when analysing the current situation, and they should alert us to the possibility that those recent difficulties, which those countries have barely begun to overcome, could re-emerge. This emergency public-health crisis will undoubtedly have broader implications involving political, economic, social and humanitarian issues. We should emphasize the very troubling fact that 70 per cent of Ebola victims have been women, showing that in these circumstances the issue of gender requires special attention.

I would also like to mention the resolution adopted at the first meeting of the Special Committee of the South America-Africa Cooperation Forum, held on 8 and 9 September in Quito, Ecuador, where serious concern was expressed about the Ebola epidemic and its negative effects in the region, and at which it was agreed, among other things, that the Union of South American Nations should convene a meeting as soon as possible to discuss ways and means of supporting our brother countries in Africa. Furthermore, today's briefings to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General and by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as WHO's report, are testimony to the sensitivity of this issue and the priority it should be given on our agenda.

We should point out that the exponential increase in the number of victims owing to the Ebola epidemic is also partly rooted in the poverty of the region as a result of decades of violence, plunder and ruin. It is therefore a matter not only of addressing the health emergency but also of rebuilding those institutions that can bring about the stability, peace and prosperity of the region. We hope that the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response and the solidarity of Member States provides results in the for, of an effective and efficient response so as to address the catastrophe.

Finally, I would like to say that our Bolivarian Government follows a policy and the humanitarian principle of unconditional solidarity with the peoples of the world, who seek the pursuit of common happiness and the achievement of peace. It has always addressed, without exception, the inequalities and social inequities that beset most peoples in the world. The tragic situation

that our brotherly countries of Africa are currently experiencing will be no exception.

In that regard, given the urgency of the situation, our Government is considering how it can best leverage the specific assistance that we will provide to ensure its swift delivery to the peoples and Governments impacted by the disaster. I also wish to report that we are in direct contact with the Presidents of the four relevant countries so that we can contribute as rapidly and effectively as possible. They can count on our assistance and ongoing support.

Mr. Shearman (United Kingdom): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's meeting on this vital issue. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his powerful statement on a health crisis that has profound implications for us all. The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks to that statement.

The current Ebola epidemic has become a humanitarian, social and economic crisis for the three most affected West Africa countries and their 22 million people. If we fail to act now, it threatens to become a catastrophe that will destroy economies and neutralize the gains of recent years. It is crucial that the international community work together to fight and stop the epidemic not only by assisting the three most affected countries but also by helping other countries in the region to be ready if the disease spreads to them.

The United Nations has a vital role to play in bringing Ebola under control. We welcome the adoption of resolution 69/1, on measures to contain and combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. We also welcome the efforts made so far to coordinate, to scale up and to speed up the response of the United Nations system, in particular the announcement by the Secretary-General of the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response.

In addition, we welcome yesterday's adoption of Security Council resolution 2177 (2014), with a record 134 sponsors. The United Kingdom is committed to playing its part. We have already started work on the provision of a $60 million Freetown health centre. That centre will give confidence to health workers who are bravely battling against Ebola. British military experts and staff from Save the Children UK have already joined them on the ground to get the centre operational. On Wednesday, my Foreign Secretary announced a significantly increased package of support. At the heart of that package is the commitment to lead and to underwrite the provision of a total of 700 treatment beds for Sierra Leone. More than 200 of those beds are already in the delivery pipeline. We will now deliver a further 500 treatment beds and work with partners to provide and train the international and national staff needed to operate them. That is in addition to the support that we are committing to partners such as the World Health Organization, the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Rescue Committee, the Ebola Response Consortium, UNICEF and other parts of the United Nations system.

We welcome the announcements of support from others, such as the generous United States assistance to Liberia, this week's announcement that France will step up its support to Guinea, and pledges of help from countries such as China, Canada and Cuba, as well as those made yesterday in the Security Council (see S/PV.7268). However, we need a huge and sustainable global effort if we are to beat the scourge. Without an immediate concerted global push, Ebola will kill many thousands more, affecting communities for a generation. Now is the time for united action. We call on all countries to join the global coalition against Ebola without hesitation or doubt and with the determination that we will end the terrible outbreak.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. We wish you success in your leadership and assure you of our cooperation and support throughout the session.

My delegation wishes to acknowledge the timely convening of this meeting a day after the Security Council adopted resolution 2177 (2014). It calls on all Member States to respond as quickly as possible to the urgent need to address the serious challenge of Ebola, which is affecting several countries in West Africa and threatens to spread.

The crisis compels us to reflect on the urgent need to strengthen national health-care systems and to take national and international action in order to deal with the outbreak in the short term. It is a crisis without borders and therefore requires a borderless response without obstacles or conditions. Resolution 69/1, which we adopted today, supports the initiative of the Secretary-General to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response and clearly

demonstrates the common will of the Organization to cooperate and to provide humanitarian support.

As in the case of the cholera outbreak in Haiti, to which Mexico responded, I would also like to convey my delegation's solidarity with the countries affected by Ebola. The health care that some countries of West Africa need today requires our rapid, effective, sustainable and generous response. Let us remain mindful of the possible implications of the crisis for international peace and security. Above all, may we be sensitive to the needs for social development and health services of the affected countries. Mexico stands ready to provide its support and solidarity to deal with this emergency and to ensure that the affected countries can return to the path of development as soon as possible with the full support of the international community.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): First of all, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the office of President of the General Assembly and to affirm Brazil's full cooperation during your term in office. I also wish to thank you for having convened this important meeting today. I wish to reiterate my delegation's appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General and for the leadership shown by the Director-General of the World Health Organization in establishing the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) with the urgency that that requires.

Yesterday, the Security Council adopted resolution 2177 (2014) on the response to the Ebola crisis with an unprecedented number of sponsors — a clear recognition of the gravity of the outbreak and a sign of the awareness of the serious consequences that health-related emergencies pose for our development efforts.

Today, the General Assembly rallied behind the Governments and the peoples of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and expressed its commitment to fully supporting UNMEER. Brazil will remain completely engaged in such efforts and solidarity with our friends in Africa. I would like thank the Secretary-General for outlining the basic objectives of the Mission in his letter dated 17 September to the President of the General Assembly (A/69/389) and for highlighting the importance of concerted and coordinated action among the United Nations system, the World Health Organization, Member States and other relevant organizations.

As Brazil declared yesterday in the Security Council (see S/PV.7268), I wish to reaffirm the intention of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to serve as a platform for the exchange of information and raising of awareness on the severity of the emergency. As Chair of the PBC, Brazil would have liked to see a recognition in resolution 2177 (2014) of the PBC's early warning to the international community on the Ebola epidemic and its dramatic proportions.

We are particularly encouraged by the strategic purpose of UNMEER to provide training infrastructure for medical and non-medical personnel, as that will enable local health-care providers to safely carry out their work and, in line with the principles stated by the Secretary-General, build the necessary capacity to strengthen the national systems in the countries affected, so that they will be prepared to prevent future outbreaks. We must not forget that the crisis presently affecting Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone is, more than anything else, a health emergency and a social and developmental challenge. It must be dealt with as such, with the General Assembly playing a central role. We look forward to examining the upcoming report of the Secretary-General on the necessary resource requirements for UNMEER and we call for the support of all Member States.

Finally, I must make a special mention of appreciation to the health-care providers — doctors, nurses — humanitarian workers and all others who have been part of efforts to fight the Ebola epidemic in West Africa as well as those who will take part in UNMEER. We wish them quick success and a safe return.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): Let me begin by expressing Japan's deepest sympathy to the families of the ever-growing number of victims of Ebola and to the people and the Governments of the affected countries. It is important to coordinate our actions at the international level in order to rapidly address this global health crisis. To that end, Japan is very grateful to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership in addressing the crisis. That is why the Government of Japan lends its full support to resolution 69/1, which we have just adopted. Japan expects that the United Nations will combat Ebola as one body, by making the fullest use of the new United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response mechanism.

I would like to briefly share Japan's efforts to respond to the emergency. We have so far provided $5 million for West Africa, dispatched Japanese medical doctors and supplied 20,000 infection-protection suits for health-care workers. Japan also stands ready to

provide a new medication against Ebola developed by two Japanese companies, Toyama Chemical Company, Ltd. and the Fujifilm Holdings Corporation. Over the long term, we will continue to support the African countries' own efforts in improving their resilience against public health crises. Strengthening Africa's social and economic resilience is one of the priorities of Japanese policy towards Africa.

In conclusion, I join other speakers in expressing our hope that this Ebola outbreak will be quickly brought under control. I would like to reiterate Japan's determination to take an active role in combating that global threat.

Mr. Grant (Canada): On behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I extend our profound condolences to and solidarity with the peoples of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, as well as Nigeria and Senegal, for the extreme challenges confronting them due to the Ebola crisis. Canada remains deeply concerned about the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, which risks undermining the foundations for economic prosperity, security and social stability that have been painstakingly supported by the United Nations system, including the Peacebuilding Commission.

(*spoke in French*)

We recognize that this crisis has arisen in a chronically fragile situation in regions where great poverty reigns, which have barely recovered from decades of conflict and civil unrest. In partnership with the United Nations system and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières and other actors, the Government has clearly expressed the urgent need for a collective response if we want to succeed in avoiding worst-case scenarios.

(*spoke in English*)

We are looking to the United Nations to present a coherent approach to enable timely and effective responses by the global community. In that regard, we welcome the degree to which the Secretary-General and the United Nations as a whole are making the response to the Ebola crisis a key priority. Specifically, the establishment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response is unprecedented, and we expect that it will provide much-needed field support to those working on the front lines of the crisis.

Canada made early contributions in support of humanitarian and security interventions to help contain the spread of Ebola throughout West Africa. We have provided expert deployments, vaccines and material and financial support. Our contributions to the World Health Organization (WHO), Médecins Sans Frontières and local Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations has helped established the base for their respective response activities. In addition, Canada has deployed a mobile laboratory to Sierra Leone with rotating teams of Canadian laboratory technicians and supplies. We have also enabled the deployment of four Canadian Red Cross delegates to Guinea and Sierra Leone and four Canadian experts to Sierra Leone working for UNICEF, and committed over $2.5 million in personal protective equipment to WHO for distribution.

Recognizing the extraordinary circumstances and for the benefit of the global community, Canada donated to the WHO nearly a thousand doses of the experimental vaccine VSV-EBOV. We have also actively contributed to the WHO expert panels on Ebola.

Canada is now considering the United Nations appeal issued on 16 September and will work in a coordinated manner with all partners to make it possible for an effective global response to bring the outbreak under control. We shall continue to support those collective efforts to bring an end to the terrible suffering and loss of life caused by the Ebola crisis.

Mr. Zamora Rivas (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. We are confident that under your leadership, Sir, this body, the most representative of the United Nations, will strengthen its role in order to respond to events that concern our membership.

As an example of this leadership and the role of the General Assembly, we commend the work of your Office in submitting resolution 69/1, entitled "Measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa", which we have just adopted. We also take note of resolution 2177 (2014), adopted yesterday by the Security Council on the same subject, from the perspective of international peace and security.

The letter sent to the Secretary-General by the Presidents of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone leaves no doubt about the need for a rapid, effective and united response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. But solidarity is not all that is called for when we are

facing the risk that Ebola could spread across the world. We are talking of no less than the health of our own people. We have faced such risks in the past, with sad results. El Salvador therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, which should work closely with the World Health Organization as well as with all the agencies, funds and programmes of the Organization.

El Salvador occupies one of the world's most vulnerable territories, which is exposed to risks that include, among other things, earthquakes, volcanoes and climatic extremes. My country has always been the beneficiary of the solidarity of the peoples and the Governments of other countries when we have been affected by disasters related to those risks. Therefore, El Salvador sees it as an opportunity and an honour to reciprocate those expressions of solidarity by offering the affected populations whatever services the United Nations considers relevant.

In that regard, we wish to go beyond simply responding to the call of the United Nations to urge all Member States to join in this noble endeavour. Just four days ago, our Minister for Public Health publicly invited personnel from my country's health sector to help the victims of this disease. As of this morning, more than 80 doctors, along with dozens of health workers, have signed up to offer their professional services to those in need in West Africa, wherever the affected countries and the United Nations decide they are most needed.

Mr. Wang Hao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. China would also like to thank you and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for your efforts, and China welcomes the swift convening of this meeting on the outbreak of Ebola.

We support the adoption of today's historic resolution 69/1, establishing a special mission in West Africa. The Ebola outbreak is currently raging in the West African countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, posing a serious threat to the lives and health of the countries concerned. When one side is in difficulty, all sides should help. Combating the outbreak of Ebola is no longer a task solely for the people and countries of Africa; it is also the common responsibility of the world. Time means lives. The characteristics of this Ebola outbreak enable it to spread quickly, widely and deeply. The more time it takes, the more difficult and more costly it will be to control the disease. China therefore calls upon the international community once again to lend intensified urgency to combating this outbreak and to quickly provide assistance to the countries concerned.

China experienced a severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003, and we keenly feel the suffering of the people of West Africa. The Chinese leaders and Government attach great importance to the outbreak in West Africa, and we therefore immediately provided assistance to them and shared our experience. As of today, China has 174 medical experts and workers deployed in the affected areas of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. Yesterday, President Xi Jinping announced that the Chinese Government has decided that, on the basis of the two packages of earlier assistance, we will provide additional emergency cash, food and material aid totalling Y200 million to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, and $2 million to the World Health Organization and the African Union to support their struggle against Ebola.

As a next stage, China, together with all the countries of the world, will join forces with the countries concerned in West Africa to overcome the difficulties and achieve victory over the disease. We hope that, with the help of the international community, the people of West Africa will soon win the battle over Ebola and that national stability, along with economic and social development, will be restored as soon as possible.

Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor on behalf of my country at this session, I wish to extend to you, Sir, Cuba's most cordial and heartfelt congratulations. I assure you that you have the full support of our delegation. We have every confidence that you will ably lead members at this session. I would also like to commend you for convening this timely meeting, which is a credit to you and speaks to your able leadership as President from the Africa Group that one of our first meetings specifically looks, as it should, at the emergency in Africa caused by the Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

Allow me also, Sir, to express our support and solidarity with the authorities of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, whose foreign ministers all took the floor in the Security Council yesterday (see S/PV.7268). I believe that they are carrying out commendable and intense work and that our cooperation is essential to their success.

I would like now to refer to and support the Secretary-General's proposal to create a United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response in West Africa. His proposal comes at a time when it is absolutely essential to establish such a mission, and for it to be established under the leadership of the United Nations. The Mission addresses an issue that can wait no longer. Once again, we are convinced that we can be successful. The women, the elderly and the children of West Africa deserve that response.

I also wish to acknowledge Ms. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, who has been leading her organization's support of the work of the health authorities in the affected countries from the very beginning.

Cuba's Ministry of Health announced in Geneva our commitment to send a volunteer medical brigade to Sierra Leone to join the fight against the epidemic. All of the members of the brigade have at least 15 years of professional service and have worked in other countries, where they have tackled natural disasters and epidemics, as well as served on cooperative medical missions. We are prepared to work shoulder to shoulder with other countries, even those with which Cuba does not have diplomatic relations. Cuba's response is part of its assistance and solidarity with Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. In the battle against Ebola, which should be everyone's battle, Cuba decided to maintain its cooperation and extend it to the most affected countries. Those countries have already been informed of that initiative by our authorities. In the rest of the region not affected by Ebola, where we have over 4,000 health workers, we stand ready to help in preventing the disease.

The medical brigades that will be sent to Africa to tackle Ebola are part of the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors, established in 2005 and made up of specialized doctors who are used to tackling disasters and major epidemiological issues. The Cuban Government's response confirms the values of solidarity that have guided our people and the Cuban revolution. As was said earlier on, those values lead us not to offer leftovers, but to share the little that we have.

Africa is awaiting an immediate response from all Member States, especially from those that have resources. I believe that, in some way or another, we all have something to give. It is urgent that we all join in the global effort against Ebola, and Cuba stands ready to continue to contribute to that effort.

Once again, we congratulate you, Sir, on this commendable initiative and on the adoption of resolution 69/1, which we were able to support today. We believe this is a timely moment and opportunity.

Mr. Eriza (Indonesia): My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. My delegation would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. As the recent developments in global affairs have shown, your tenure as President will undoubtedly be challenging, but my delegation fervently believes that your commendable leadership will guide the Assembly in the right direction in carrying out the challenging tasks ahead. The convening of the Assembly's meeting on the agenda item entitled "Global health and foreign policy" to consider the adoption of resolution 69/1, on the Ebola outbreak, is a testimony of your able leadership within just a few days of your assumption of office.

Last month the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the 2014 Ebola outbreak to be one of the largest Ebola outbreaks in history. It has had massive humanitarian impacts on the most affected countries and on the region. Recently, we received a joint letter from the Presidents of the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Republic of Liberia and the Republic of Guinea appealing to the good in each and everyone of us to support their efforts to save people in their countries.

A coordinated international response to stop and reverse the international spread of the disease is indeed vital. As the Director-General of WHO said during her briefing to Member States earlier this month, now is not the time for lots of words, now is the time for action. My delegation therefore welcomes and fully supports the Secretary-General's initiative to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. We hope that the crisis can be contained soon.

Ms. King (Australia): Australia welcomes the adoption of resolution 69/1, which supports the Secretary-General's intention to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response.

The Ebola outbreak is an urgent and devastating crisis. It has transformed itself into much more than a health crisis, as we all know, with grave humanitarian, economic and social consequences that could spread far beyond the affected countries. We have heard that the already high numbers of infections and deaths are multiplying exponentially, doubling every three weeks. Health systems in the affected countries have been

stretched to the point of collapse. Sick and infected people are being turned away from overflowing treatment centres to die. We have heard the dire forecast of what will happen if Ebola is left to continue its alarming spread. We know that action is urgent and that the United Nations system is critical to the response.

Despite the heroic efforts of all those who are grappling with the crisis, we have much catching up to do if we are to succeed in bending the epidemiological curve down from its current trajectory. The effects of the outbreak are still reversible, but only if the response and particularly isolation and treatment capacity are scaled up massively and quickly. It is absolutely vital that there be a coordinated and comprehensive response. Australia therefore strongly supports the Secretary-General's efforts, through Mr. Nabarro and by working closely with Ms. Chan and the World Health Organization (WHO), to ensure that the United Nations system plays a leading role in the global effort to control the outbreak. We recognize that this is an unprecedented challenge that requires an equally unprecedented response, which is why Australia welcomes and supports the Secretary-General's initiative to immediately establish the first-ever United Nations international public health mission.

Australia is committed to supporting the international response, and we stand in solidarity with the affected countries and their people. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs announced this week that Australia would immediately provide a further $7 million, including for the WHO consolidated regional response and to support the provision of front-line medical services. Australia will continue to assess areas where it can best contribute to the crisis.

Mr. Nduhuura (Uganda): As this is the first time that I take the floor, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

Uganda has experienced Ebola outbreaks four times in the past 14 years, with our worst experience in the years 2000 and 2001, which involved 425 cases. In 2001 Ebola killed 224 people, including Dr. Matthew Lukwiya, the doctor who accurately diagnosed and reported its occurrence. In 2007 it killed only 37 people, while in 2009 it killed 17. In direct comparison, as of a week ago, the reported cases in West Africa were over 4,700 in number and are still on the rise.

Uganda is prepared to share its experience and stands ready to continue providing the assistance required during this trying time. Our experience has taught us that aggressive public-health campaigns are key in curbing the spread of epidemics. The Ugandan Government was unreserved in sending out warnings, replete with descriptions of Ebola symptoms and advice on how to handle those presenting with it, as well as describing proper procedures for handling and burying the dead.

In Uganda, as soon as the first Ebola cases were identified, public health officials created makeshift quarantine facilities and called a press conference, together with the World Health Organization, to ask for help. We exposed the problem right away and demystified any stigma attached to it. Other measures included Uganda's active infectious disease-surveillance network, which offers a quick reaction time to deal with suspected cases. The swift local response created opportunities for international assistance to reach us. People looked out for the symptoms, and they immediately reported suspected cases to surveillance officials. It is one of the reasons that Uganda has successfully stamped out four Ebola outbreaks, even ones that have occurred in urban areas. Our high adult literacy rates also played a role, because that increased the options of the communication media in informing the general public.

Uganda shares the grave concern expressed by the rest of the Member States about the rapid deterioration of the health situation in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and about the fact that the epidemic has begun to grow exponentially in that region, with no respect for borders. We stand in solidarity with those countries.

In July, Uganda sent a team of 20 of our top Ebola experts to Sierra Leone and Liberia. The team had specializations including epidemiology, case management, community education and psychosocial support. However, they quickly discovered that this was a situation where even protective equipment was insufficient. The medical workers needed equipment, training and resources. The disease once again claimed the life of one of Uganda's senior surgeons, Dr. Samuel Muhumuza Mutoro, in Monrovia. Fragile health systems create weaker support systems for medical personnel, who could potentially walk off a job that unnecessarily increases their chances of exposure.

In that respect, Uganda welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). We agree that the priorities of UNMEER should be to stop Ebola, treat patients, ensure continued services, maintain stability and prevent further outbreaks.

Africa has battled several challenges and has built up its medical human resources in spite of very many odds stacked against it, including HIV/AIDS. We cannot afford to lose the battle against this disease.

Mr. Deniau (France) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

I would like to align myself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union.

The health crisis caused by Ebola has by its scale turned into a socioeconomic crisis, and it now constitutes a threat to peace and security. It is our duty to stop the progression of this scourge. This is why France has made the fight against Ebola a priority, and it is fighting alongside the African countries concerned. Our collective responsibility is focused on three priorities. These are to act, to coordinate and to prevent.

First, we must act. That is why, since the beginning of this epidemic, my country has taken the initiative to support the actions of affected African States and of the World Health Organization and non-governmental organizations that are contributing to the fight. The experts of French laboratories of the Pasteur Institute identified the presence of the virus last May, and they were among the first in the field in Guinea. Today, assistance from France to combat Ebola has reached over €60 million, with the funding going through the various relevant channels.

Strictly on a bilateral level, my country will provide €35 million to affected countries and their neighbours. A substantial part will be concentrated on Guinea, which the French Minister for Cooperation visited several days ago. In addition, the President of the French Republic has just announced the establishment in the coming days of a branch of the Pasteur Institute and a military hospital in the forested area of Guinea, a region known to be the centre of the epidemic. The hospital will be staffed with military doctors and doctors specialized in civilian protection and will have air support.

Next, we must coordinate the efforts to contain the epidemic. That is why, at the European level, at our initiative the European Union will quickly have the means to coordinate health evacuations. We are also working at the level of the United Nations, in close coordination with the World Health Organization and with the United Nations Coordinator for the Ebola Emergency Response, David Nabarro, concentrating our efforts specifically on Guinea, as Mr. Nabarro has asked us to do. We are also providing support, including human resources, to the Crisis Operations Centre based in New York.

Finally, we must prevent. We can contain Ebola if simple and strict health-safety rules are applied. But beyond that, we will find a lasting solution only by helping the countries affected to strengthen their health systems for the duration, and by focusing particular attention in those countries on the most vulnerable populations, in particular women. As the Secretary-General said earlier, this disease takes an especially heavy toll on women.

I would like to welcome the commitment of all the Member States that are participating in the international mobilization against Ebola. I also wish to commend the courage of the health staff in the affected countries, both local and international, who are working in the field to combat the epidemic. We must admire their courage. I have in mind in particular the dedication of the Médecins Sans Frontières teams. I think that we must really commend the courage shown by those men and women.

In that context, France can only strongly welcome the initiative that you, Mr. President, took in submitting the text of resolution 69/1, which we have adopted today. Following yesterday's adoption of Security Council resolution 2177 (2014), today's resolution reaffirms our full support and the mobilization of the entire United Nations system and all Member States. The meeting organized for 25 September by the Secretary-General will be another demonstration of that collective determination. As part of this international mobilization, which one must call historic, you, Mr. President, can count on the strong support of France.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): Sweden aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Let me begin by expressing our deepest condolences to the families and friends of all those who have perished in the Ebola outbreak. We commend

the affected countries for their resilience and steadfast determination in these difficult times, and we pay tribute to the many brave health workers engaged in the tireless efforts to counter this terrible disease. Let me also express appreciation for the important support provided by the United Nations family and other international partners.

This important meeting is in itself an acknowledgment of the seriousness of the situation. We join others in a global appeal for a scaling-up of international efforts. We welcome the Secretary-General's initiative to convene a high-level meeting next week and his efforts to improve coordination of international assistance, not least through the appointment of a Senior United Nations System Coordinator. The decision today to establish a United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response is also critical in this regard.

Sweden has long-standing bilateral relations with the countries concerned. We are also a leading humanitarian donor globally, and we have responded accordingly to this crisis. We have already contributed $4.4 million to the three countries most affected, and we are in the final stages of preparing an additional package of $13 million for the appeal of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. We will shortly revert with additional substantive commitments, including logistical support.

As Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission country team for Liberia, we will continue to contribute to a comprehensive approach to this crisis, as well as to promote a regional perspective and link short-term assistance to the longer-term peacebuilding priorities in the country. We are committed to standing by all the countries facing this merciless epidemic, and we look forward to the opportunity to announce further significant support in the near future.

Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania): We too would like to commend you, Mr. President, on your assumption of your office and for convening this important meeting.

The voices we have heard here today, in the Security Council yesterday (see S/PV.7268) and elsewhere are truly encouraging. All that remains is to put those commitments into action. The victims of the Ebola outbreak deserve our sincere sympathy and support. Isolating and stigmatizing the victims, including through transport restrictions, is truly unfortunate. We call for an urgent review of such restrictions.

The Ebola outbreak has highlighted the fragility that persists in Africa as well as in other parts of the world. While we are directing our efforts to eradicating the Ebola outbreak in the short and medium term, in the long term what we have to do is to build the capacities of the health and humanitarian sectors so they can cope with major outbreaks such as that of the Ebola virus. At the African Union Summit in Malabo in June, His Excellency President Jakaya Kikwete expressed the readiness of the United Republic of Tanzania to support the regional interventions spearheaded by the African Union, as well as the international efforts, including those undertaken by the United Nations. Our resolve and commitment to support those measures continue. We will also continue to work with partners to strengthen the level of preparedness for addressing this Ebola epidemic.

Mr. Talbert (Guyana): I thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in convening this important meeting and for your leadership in facilitating an urgent response by the General Assembly to the Ebola crisis. We welcome today's adoption of resolution 69/1, on measures to contain and combat the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

Guyana would like to take this opportunity to register its concern about the deadly Ebola epidemic, unprecedented in scale and impact, that has struck West Africa. We express our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the countries affected, particularly Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and our support for a robust response on the part of the international community. The crisis brings with it a plethora of challenges that require a multidimensional and multisectoral response at the national, regional and international levels. In addition to the obvious public-health implications of the epidemic, the Secretary-General has drawn attention to the significant political, social, economic, humanitarian and security dimensions of the crisis.

The Governments of the affected countries are making valiant efforts to respond to the crisis and contain the spread of the disease. However, given its exponential spread, an urgent, massively scaled-up and coordinated global response has become imperative if we are to bring it under control and prevent its spread to other territories. Guyana supports all efforts to that end. In that regard, our delegation applauds the Secretary-

General's leadership and supports his initiative to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. For its part, the Government of Guyana is currently actively considering an appropriate contribution in the context of the global response.

The President: We have heard the last speaker on this item. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 124.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.